(a) whether it is a fact that due to delay in loading of goods at major and minor ports of the country, the goods reach their destination late;

(b) if yes, the details in this regard and the average delay observed in loading goods;

(c) whether in order to tackle this delay there is a proposal to implement Captive Use Policy; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI G.K. VASAN): (a) and (b) No, Sir. So far as major ports are concerned, there is no delay in loading of goods. Non-Major ports come under the jurisdiction of respective state governments.

(c) and (d) In the context of the recession and its impact on the business of the major ports, it was decided to re-look at some of the policies which directly have a bearing on the functioning of the major ports. Accordingly, a committee has been set up to go into the whole issue. The committee is also looking into the issue of allowing captive use facilities to port based industries located in port premises.

Deposit and lending rates of banks

*249. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Bank of India (SBI) has decided to cut deposit rates by 25 basis points;

(b) if so, whether banks have been asked to bring down lending rates further as there is considerable scope for it;

(c) whether Government has also urged banks to restore tax sops on long term lending for core projects; and

(d) if so, what are the steps Government proposes to take to bring the economy back on track and the details of the steps Government is taking in this regard?

THE FINANCE MINISTER (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir. The latest reduction in deposit rates by the State Bank of India (SBI) was by 25 basis points w.e.f. 15th June, 2009.

(b) The RBI has deregulated the interest rates on advances above Rs. 2 lakh w.e.f. October 1994. The rates of interest on advances are determined by the banks themselves subject to the Benchmark Prime Lending Rates (BPLR) and spread guidelines. While determining the BPLR, banks are guided by actual cost of funds, operating expenses, margin to cover regulatory requirements of provisioning, etc.

(c) No, Sir. The tax incentives for core/infrastructure sector are provided as per the relevant provisions of the Income Tax Act, 1961.

(d) The Government has announced a number of measures in the Budget 2009-10 to revive the economy. These include a prominent thrust to the infrastructure sector through "takeout financing", Public Private Partnership (PPP) and removal of policy, regulatory and institutional bottlenecks in infrastructure projects. In addition, agricultural development is to be given a boost through increase in plan allocation, higher credit target and continued interest rates subvention. There is also focus on reviving the export and the MSME sector. These measures are in addition to the steps already taken in the previous fiscal stimulus packages in the form of tax relief and increased expenditure on public programmes to increase demand.

Revival of sick PSUs

*250. DR. E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) how many cases of revival of sick Public Sector Units (PSUs) have been recommended by the Board for Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises (BRPSE);

(b) what is the total cost of revival in terms of waivers and fresh investments;

(c) how many cases out of such recommended cases, which have been accepted by Government; and

(d) what is the cost of revival in terms of waivers and fresh investments?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI VILASRAO DESHMUKH): (a) Board for Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises (BRPSE) has recommended revival of 55 Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs), upto 15.7.2009.

(b) The total cost of revival of 55 CPSEs amount to Rs. 33,150 crores as recommended by BRPSE (cash assistance of Rs. 5,168 crores in the form of infusion of funds and non-cash assistance of Rs. 27,982 crores in the form of waivers/write offs).

(c) The Government have accepted revival proposals of 35 CPSEs.

(d) The total cost of revival of 35 CPSEs amounts to Rs. 15,115 crores (cash assistance of Rs. 2,921 crores in the form of infusion of funds and non-cash assistance of Rs. 12,194 crores in the form of waivers/write offs.

Scam in NREGS

†*251. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a scam amounting to crores of rupees has been unearthed under National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS);

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.